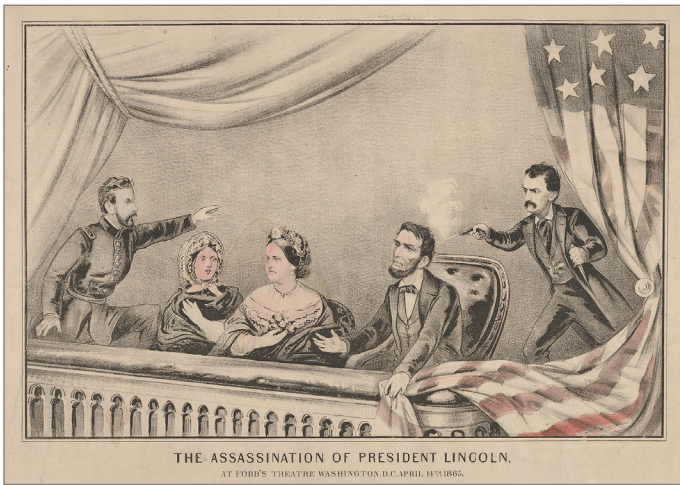


THE VOICE

of the *Chattahoochee Valley Historical Society and Cobb Memorial Archives*

"JOHN WILKES BOOTH IN ALABAMA" *Presenter Jim Baggett*



The Assassination of President Lincoln at Ford's Theatre, Washington D.C., April 14th, 1865, from Currier and Ives.

The Fall program of CVHS will be held virtually on October 24th, at 3:00 PM (EDT). Our presenter, Mr. Jim Baggett, is the Head of the Department of Archives and Manuscripts at the Birmingham Public Library and Archivist for the City of Birmingham. His presentation for our October program will focus on John Wilkes Booth, the infamous assassin of President Abraham Lincoln, and his time spent in the State of Alabama before April of 1865.

Prior to his infamy as America's first Presidential assassin, John Wilkes Booth was a well-renowned star of the American stage of the 19th century. Born into the celebrated Booth family of actors from Maryland, he and his brother Edwin Booth were known throughout the United States in the late 1850s and early war years. The family traveled all throughout the country, and this included the states of the soon-to-be Confederacy in 1860. Booth is known to have visited

Alabama one time. In the fall of 1860, he spent six weeks in Montgomery performing to packed audiences as Romeo, Hamlet, and Richard III. During that time, he witnessed and took part in Alabama's debates on secession. According to some accounts, Booth was chased out of Montgomery for expressing a strong

allegiance to the Union (which is ironic given his later infamy in the northern states for supporting the Confederacy and eventual role as assassin).

While much of Mr. Baggett's presentation will focus on his actual visit to Alabama, it will also explore a "legend" concerning Booth returning to Alabama after the war (and his subsequent death). In the years that followed Lincoln's assassination, Booth allegedly revisited Alabama (if only in spirit). Baggett will talk about a legend, originating from one of his former lovers, that Booth did not actually die in 1865, but lived on and traveled to many places. A part of the upcoming presentation will focus on one of his "post-humous journeys" to the State of Alabama in the years following the end of the war.

Jim Baggett currently serves as the President of the Alabama Historical Association (previously serving as President of the Society of Alabama Archivists). He originally graduated from the University of Alabama at Birmingham in 1986 with a B.A. in History and has since earned two M.A.s in History (the most recent from the University of Alabama in 1997). Jim has lectured throughout the U.S. and in Europe and has been featured on Alabama Public Television, Alabama Public Radio, National Public Radio, and C-SPAN. He has authored two books on Alabama history, edited three others, and has written dozens of articles for various magazines such as *The Alabama Review* (among others). He also writes the "Reading Birmingham" book column for the online news site BirminghamWatch. Jim lives with his wife and daughter in Birmingham and Mentone, Alabama.

Join us for this very informative and interesting presentation on October 24th. To attend this virtual meeting email ccpowers02@gmail.com prior to 12:00 PM noon (EDT) on Sunday, October 24th. You will then be sent the Zoom link with instructions regarding how to join the meeting.

THE CHATTAHOOCHEE VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY MEETING

Sunday, October 24th, 2022

3:00 p.m. EDT (2:00 CDT)

VIRTUAL MEETING

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *by Malinda Powers*

I have recently been reflecting more than usual on our organization's mission, goals that have been set over the last few years, and accomplishments achieved. Our greatest assets include our current inventory of local histories, which we have posted for sale via our website. Greater still is the abundance of historical material chronicled since our founding in the 1950's that resides within Cobb Memorial Archives for public access.

In the 1970's, members of CVHS advocated for a local archive in which to preserve their plethora of research on our area's early families, the Battle of Fort Tyler, etc. Housed inside and under the direction of the Chambers County Bradshaw Library in Valley, the Cobb Archives is today a most notable repository of local community and family histories. Today, Ms. Robin Watson serves as its excellent director. She and the late Miriam Syler have served many, many grateful patrons over the years.

While our founders were focused on preserving our region's early historical written record, today we face a more daunting challenge: the preservation of *places of our collective past*. Recently, we highlighted the likely demise of Langdale School and Auditorium, as well as the poor condition of Sears Hall.

I'm pleased to share some hopeful news on this last topic. A few weeks ago, it was reported in the local newspaper that the Valley Parks & Recreation department was interested in the possibility of rehabilitating Sears Hall for use as an additional gymnasium. Kudos to the City for perhaps solving this dilemma while offering its

citizens additional recreational space!

As for the Langdale Mill site, it was sold in September 2017 to a demolition company, primarily for its valuable historic timbers. The oldest section (circa 1887), however, is still standing five years later. Additionally, the old Powerhouse behind the mill will most likely be divested in coming months by Georgia Power Company, which wishes to avoid maintenance costs on a dam that no longer is in service. Not to mention trying to avoid liability claims for unfortunate paddlers who spill over the dam. The old 1910 Powerhouse would certainly make a unique special events facility! With the mill lies the last vestige of what we as a community once were—that which united us and made us who we are. As long as it is still standing, there's still hope that it can be saved and repurposed. When it's gone, there will be virtually nothing left to recall the days of the once-largest textile company in the world!

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as CVHS President for the past six years. In 2023, Jason Williams, currently V.P./Membership, will take the helm. Jason has a heart for preservation and is very well-connected with statewide historic preservation. I will remain on the board, continuing in my role as Treasurer. A big shout-out to our other dedicated board members: Dr. Horace M. Holderfield, Tony Peregoy, Ron Williams, Wayne Clark, and Charlie Powers. And a heartfelt thanks to all of you loyal and faithful members! God bless you all!



The VOICE is a quarterly newsletter of the Chattahoochee Valley Historical Society, Inc., P.O. Box 718, West Point, Georgia 31833

Editor: Ron Williams (hopewellroad@yahoo.com)

Find us on Facebook and visit our website at <https://cvhistoricalsociety.org/>

MISSION STATEMENT: As a non-profit membership organization, the Chattahoochee Valley Historical Society seeks to preserve and promote the history and heritage of Chambers County, Alabama, West Point, Georgia, and the greater Chattahoochee Valley area. CVHS produces and sells historical books and media, publishes a quarterly newspaper, and presents programs with speakers on historical topics of local and regional interest.

VISION STATEMENT: Having been in continuous operation since its founding in 1953, the Chattahoochee Valley Historical Society strives to uphold the vision of its founders while posturing the organization for growth in the 21st Century.

WINSTON FAMILY REUNION *by Wayne Clark*

WEST POINT — A long overdue reunion took place on Saturday, August 13th, and people from all over the U.S. were there to take part. There were doctors, lawyers, ministers and other professionals among the approximately 150 guests present. Most are fifth generation descendants from slaves who worked at Woodlawn, the 1830s home on West Point's north side that was built by pioneer settler Thomas Winston near the east bank of the Chattahoochee River.

This first-ever Winston Family Reunion was hosted by Woodlawn owners Ed and Judy Garland, daughter Winston Garland and son John Garland. Attendees were taken on tours of the historic homes and the outbuildings and were shown the Winston family cemetery and a nearby site where more than 120 graves of slaves have recently been marked. The individual grave sites were located by ground-penetrating radar and marked with tiny red flags and stainless-steel disks approximately four inches across.

The guests were treated to lunch and afterward had a chance to be taken down to see the river on some very comfortable Kawasaki mules.

The Garland family has done an exceptional job of taking care of one of Troup County's most significant historic sites. Woodlawn is thought to be the oldest home still standing in West Point. In April 1865 it barely survived the Battle of West Point.

The day after Fort Tyler fell to Union forces on April 16th, the railroad and wagon bridges were burned along with much locomotive stock and warehouse goods. As the Union soldiers moved north toward LaGrange, some soldiers looted Woodlawn, spilling some burning coals from a fireplace onto the wooden floor. While this was going on, Molly Winston (Higginbotham) and approximately 20 children were hiding in the nearby woods. A fire was starting in the house as the soldiers left, and eleven-year-old Molly and the other children quickly acted to form a bucket brigade from a nearby pond to the house. They were able to get enough water on the fire to extinguish it. Woodlawn still stands today because of this heroic action, largely at the hands of African Americans who had not been officially notified of their freedom.

Ed Garland is a much-respected defense attorney in Atlanta. He has successfully defended such

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Woodlawn owner and Atlanta attorney Ed Garland (on the left) talks to a group of Winston family descendants at the first-ever Winston family reunion held in West Point on Saturday, August 13th. Garland has donated some historic family journals to Cobb Memorial Archives. They contain much information about life and the people at Woodlawn before and after the Civil War.

WINSTON FAMILY REUNION - *continued from previous page*

clients as pro football stars Ray Lewis and Ben Roethlisberger when they got in trouble in Georgia. His dad, the late Reuben Garland Sr., was a much-respected defense attorney as well.

“He was Atticus Finch before there was an Atticus Finch,” Ed Garland said.

The elder Garland defended over 500 clients who had been charged with murder, and in an era when Georgia would execute condemned men within 60 days of their conviction, only one of Garland’s clients met such a fate.

Just before lunch was served, Garland spoke to the large gathering from Woodlawn’s large veranda-style front porch. “This is an historic moment, and I don’t want to lose a second of it. I want to say welcome to all of my Winston cousins,” he said to much applause and cheering. “My family and I thank all of you for coming.”

Garland joked that he and second cousin Judge Brown Smith were the only white Winstons there.

Garland is a fifth-generation descendant of Thomas Winston. Smith today lives in Beaufort, South Carolina. He’s a 1961 graduate of Valley High. Judge Brown Road in Valley is named after his grandfather. His mother was a Winston.

The Winston descendants had a surprise for the Garlands. In the pre-lunch ceremony, they presented Ed with an historic sword that had been engraved with the name George B. Winston, Thomas Winston’s son who had served in the Civil War. Garland appeared moved by the presentation and said that he could not accept it personally but would do so on behalf of the extended Winston family.

Garland went on to say that racism remains the elephant in the room even today. He became emotional when he talked about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s famed I Have a Dream speech delivered at the Lincoln Memorial in 1963. What a lot of people don’t know about that speech, he said, is that the most powerful words came when Dr. King got away from his prepared remarks and spoke straight from the heart.

The famed gospel singer Mahalia Jackson was seated near him and told him, “Martin talk about the dream.”

With that encouragement he got away from his prepared remarks and talked about having a dream that one day in the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and sons of former slave owners would sit down at the table of brotherhood.

Garland introduced Carol Allman of Foothills Ranch, California, who is doing some genealogy research on the newly marked slave cemetery. She has identified one woman who lies at rest there. According to records she has found her name was Sylva and she died at 6 p.m. on December 13, 1849.

“I’m sure she is in the cemetery,” she said. “I will continue to do research on this.”

The graves are arranged in the Christian tradition. They face east so they can rise to see Christ upon his return to the earth.

That’s not the case in some slave cemeteries. Not much care went into the way the graves were arranged.

Standing in a nineteenth century slave cemetery was a moving experience for guests at the first-ever Winston Family Reunion. Well over 100 people lie at rest there, and those visiting the site are descended from them.

There’s a mid-sized hardwood forest growing among the individual graves, but the undergrowth is kept cut.

Several ministers voiced prayers to groups of descendants who walked to the site, which is a short distance down the hill from the 1830s plantation home. One of them, Rev. Darryl Winston, is a West Point native and now pastors a church in the Atlanta area. A photograph of his great grandfather, Hope Winston, and great grandmother, Mary Eliza Winston, were shown in the Tyler Perry movie “Fall From Grace.”

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WINSTON FAMILY REUNION - *continued from previous page*

“It has been seen all over the world,” he said. “95 percent of the people who lie here never left this place.”

Rev. Winston said he had always wanted to have a big Winston Family Reunion at Woodlawn and reached out to Ed and Judy Garland to see if it was possible. That started the ball rolling and soon a steering committee was organized to bring it together. Members included Hope Winston descendants Darryl Winston, Valerie Winston Stafford and Kyler Winston Kendricks, all of Atlanta and Marjorie Winston of Houston, Texas; a descendant of Will Winston, Bridgette Heard Wilson of Fairburn, Georgia, and Plaque Belle Winston Miller descendants Cynthia Sims of Fairburn, Marc Whiten of New York City and Brett Gaines of California.

Events included a kickoff reception at the host hotel, The Hampton Inn & Suites in Lanett, on Friday evening. It was an informal gathering that took place between 6 and 8 p.m. EDT with refreshments being served at no cost to the guests. At 9 a.m. on Saturday, the guests began arriving at Woodlawn. “This was a chance to explore our shared history, both painful and triumphant,” said Bridgette Wilson. “On this property we found the main house the Winston family lived in as well as the quarters and where many of our enslaved ancestors dwelled and were buried. Informal tours of the multi-acre property were available and a Unity Meal was served at noon.”

During the afternoon, the descendants shared family stories and learned about the many branches of their family tree. They also talked about what the future holds.

One of the descendants, Marc J. Whiten, is a retired New York City judge and is now a special advisor to the dean of the New York Law School. He’s the great grandson of Belle Winston. His dad, Joseph Whiten, and an uncle, George Lynch, were Tuskegee Airmen during World War II. Whiten has visited the Tuskegee Airmen National Historical Site. Being on Moton Field, where those men were trained, was a near religious experience

for him, so was standing in the slave cemetery. He told a gathering of fellow descendants that for most of his life slavery had been a far off, distant thing that had little personal meaning to him.

“It became real to me when I found out about my family connection to the Winstons,” he said. “It hurt, and it made me angry that it had been the way of life for my ancestors. It’s good, though, because we can learn from it and can become stronger as people. I am grateful for this visit and for being here today. It makes me want to learn more about my family history.”

Displayed on one of the hardwood trees in the cemetery is a line from the Maya Angelou poem “Still I Rise”: “You can shoot me with your words, You can cut me with your eyes, You may kill me with your hatefulness, But still, like air, I’ll rise.”

There’s a connection between the Winston family and the book “We Call Our Daddy Mister,” copies of which are available at Cobb Archives. One of the people in the book, John Thomas Winston, was called “son” by his father, Burrell Harrell. Winston’s son, who now lives in the Atlanta area, was there on Saturday.

The Archives has received a generous gift from Woodlawn owner Ed Garland. It’s a collection of journals from the mid-1800s that was kept by the Winston family. Recorded are the names of people who were living there at the time and daily entries about the weather and events taking place in West Point.

Thomas Winston and his son George helped with the construction of Fort Tyler in 1863. George served in the Confederate army during the war.

Most of the Winston descendants thoroughly enjoyed the day and meeting their distant cousins. They are planning to have more family reunions in the future.



GEORGE CALLAWAY ZACHRY, SR.



George Callaway Zachry, Sr. passed away peacefully at West Georgia Hospice in LaGrange, Georgia, on July 21, 2022.

Mr. Zachry was born October 28, 1927, in West Point, Georgia, second son to the late George Huguley and Sara Pope Callaway Zachry.

He was preceded in death by his wife of fifty-seven years, Valma Kemp Zachry; brother, James T. (Jim) Zachry; daughter, Elizabeth McKinney; granddaughter, Shannon Duck Robinson; and son-in-law, Mark Dalusky.

He is survived by his children: Carolyn Dalusky of Athens, GA, George C. Zachry, Jr. (Margaret) of Pine Mountain, GA, and Rebecca Hales (Clay) of Johns Creek, GA.

Seven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren survive including: Zach Duck (Kimberly) of Athens, GA; Fletcher McKinney (Jessica), and boys Eli, Cullen, and Liam of Robertsdale, AL; Cary McKinney of Alexander City, AL; Mary King Kurrass (Jason), and

daughters Sophie, Lilly, and Lucy of Pine Mountain, GA; George Callaway Zachry, III of Pine Mountain, GA; Alice Hales-Kharazmi (Shervin), and children Sam and Jane of Atlanta, GA; and Richard Hales (Laney) of Milton, GA.

Mr. Zachry graduated from West Point High School in 1945, and treasured lifelong friendships begun in these school days, keeping in touch over all the years through personal correspondence and reunions with his classmates.

Following high school Mr. Zachry attended Georgia Institute of Technology in the 1945/46 school year and Mercer University from 1946 - 1949. While at Mercer Mr. Zachry was active in: the Glee Club, the Red Cross, F.B.L.A., the Ciceronian Literary Society, the Alpha Phi Omega National Honor Service Fraternity (treasurer in 1948), Cluster (the campus weekly newspaper) and Phi Delta Theta Fraternity.

In 1949 Mr. Zachry returned to the family business, Zachry Brothers, in West Point with his father George H. Zachry and partners, brother Jim, and cousin Griggs.

On November 18, 1951, Mr. Zachry married Valma R. Kemp. He and Valma started a family right away, having their four children by 1957. He was a devoted father and husband who treasured family time whether it was Sunday romps in the woods, weeklong trips to the beach, or the epic two-week Zachry family adventure to California and back with Valma and all four kids piled into the station wagon.

Throughout his adult life, helping and caring for others occupied Mr. Zachry. He is remembered for delivering Meals on Wheels to shut-ins and reaching out to those in need, even after he moved into assisted living. He was devoted to his church,

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GEORGE ZACHRY

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attending every Sunday he was able. Studying and sharing God's word gave him joy as he faithfully taught Sunday school for the Men's Bible Study Class. He was always ready to share his lesson notes with those that were not able to attend.

For decades Mr. Zachry was active in the Lions Club of West Point, helping organize programs, raising money with sales, and hosting visitors from around the world through the Lions Club International Youth exchange.

Over the years Mr. Zachry nurtured and maintained a passion for researching and preserving local history. As an active member of the Chattahoochee Valley Historical Society, he contributed his own writings, shared stories and served on the board, and was treasurer for the Chambers County Book Committee. As an esteemed member of the Society, in 2001 he was conferred life membership for his "outstanding service and long, unwavering support for the purposes and endeavors of the Society".

Mr. Zachry's family expresses heart-felt gratitude to Joseph R. Downs, III, MD for a lifetime of friendship and attentive care. We are also grateful to Gary Freeman, Corey Norrell, and all the aides at Lakewood Senior Living of Valley, Alabama for the loving care Mr. Zachry received for the past ten years while he lived there.

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Years ago, I enjoyed a feature in *TIME* magazine called "Numbers." It would list figures about the news of the day and each topic was introduced by a number. This quarter we are introducing a new section in *The Voice* called "History: By the Numbers."

HISTORY BY THE NUMBERS

Our first topic will be the Chattahoochee River:

1796 The year that Benjamin Hawkins recorded that the name Chattahoochee comes from Creek Indian words which mean "stone" and "marked" or "flowered." This gives us the meaning of the name: "River of the Painted Rock."

111 Number of years that steamboats docked at the wharf in Columbus, Georgia. The first steamboat, the "Fanny," arrived on January 26, 1828.

8 Day in July 1864, when elements of General William T. Sherman's Federal Forces began crossing the Chattahoochee River and edging ever closer to Atlanta.

5 Number of stanzas in Sidney Lanier's poem, "The Song of the Chattahoochee," which was written in November of 1877 for a newspaper in West Point, GA.

1 Average number of floods West Point, GA, experienced yearly from 1900 to 1975, the year West Point Dam went into operation.

10 Number in millions of dollars that a judge fined a Chattahoochee River Polluter in August of 2015.

2:27 The length of the album version of Alan Jackson's song with that catchy line, "Way down yonder on the Chattahoochee," which was released in May of 1993.

■

THE FIRST SOAP BOX DERBY RACE IN WEST POINT, 1938

By George Zachry, Sr.

Editor's note:

This article, in memory of Mr. George Zachry, Sr., is from the CVHS's 1993 publication "Memories of the Great Depression".

I was a participant in the first Soap Box Derby race held in West Point. I always believed that this event was brought about by the enthusiasm and community spirit of Mr. Tom Roberts through the Valley Chevrolet Company, but the event was strongly supported by nearly all of the merchants in the area and I'm sure that the West Point Merchants Association had a part in it.

The race course was on the hill on West 10th St, right in front of my parent's home. One afternoon, shortly before the race was to take place, Julian Beall, Jr. and I were busy working on our cars in preparation for the race. Now, it must be understood that these were cars which we had each designed and made. This was the first Soap Box Derby race to be held in our area and we were not aware of any specifications that had to be met, other than the fact that the cars could contain no motor of any kind and their movement was to be brought about by freely rolling down the hill.

My father's business, Zachry Brothers, had just bought a new pair of hands trucks and I was given permission to use the wheels off them for the rear wheels on my car. I remember that the afternoon Julian and I were working on our cars I had completed the installation of the hand truck wheels on my car, and I was quite weary from the task.

Perhaps my car was a bit crude, but it would run, and I was just about ready but there were several feet of a piece of two by four that protruded from the rear of my car, and it badly needed to be sawed off. If there were electric saws of any type in those days, I was not aware of them and the effort of sawing off

that two by four with a handsaw was more than I could handle.

Just as I was telling Julian that I had decided to race my car with the two by four protruding, Mr. Ben Hawkins, a representative of the Life of Georgia Insurance Company, came up and asked us if we had ever noticed how fast water ran off a goose's back. Julian was just as big a liar as I was, and we both told Mr. Hawkins that we were both very aware of how rapidly water ran off a goose's back. With that, Mr. Hawkins asked us if we knew why water ran off a goose's back so rapidly and we both had to admit that we did not know. Mr. Hopkins proceeded to explain that water ran rapidly off a goose's back because the feathers of a goose had goose grease in them. Now this was something that was nice to know, but Mr. Hawkins did not really get our attention until he said that he knew a man that had some goose grease, and he would seek him out, get some, and show us what it looked like. Some 30 minutes later, Mr. Hawkins returned with a whiskey bottle containing goose grease and a feather stuck down in it. Mr. Hawkins told us that if we raced our cars with some of that goose grease, we would be sure to win the Soap Box Derby. Just before Mr. Hopkins left, he handed me the bottle containing the goose grease. This, undoubtedly, was "my finest hour". Julian would have given me anything he had at that time if only I would let him put some of that goose grease on his car. But I was smart. I would not let him have even a smudge of that grease because I was going to use it all on my car and I was going to win the Soap Box Derby!

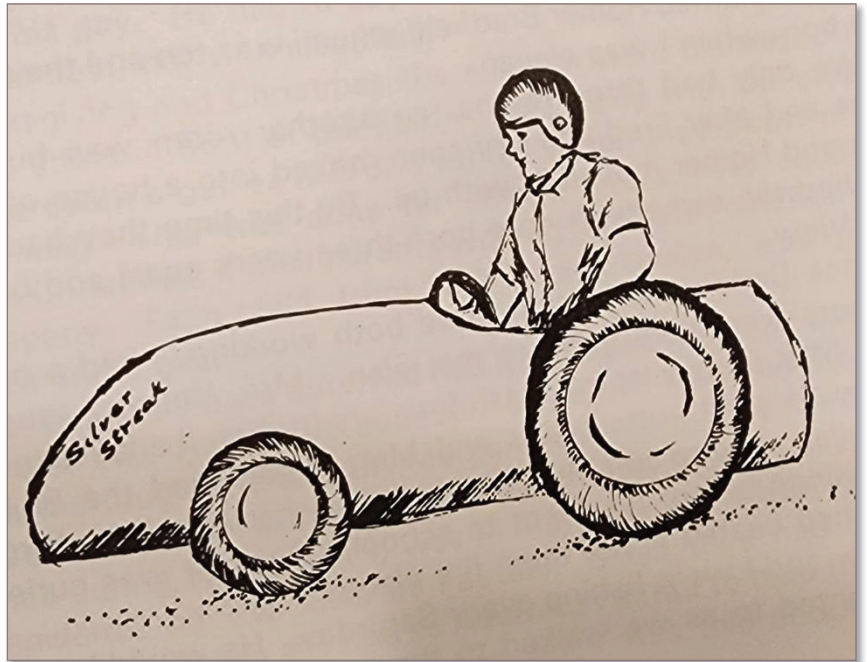
Well, I did win the first heat. I raced Jim Stanley who drove a car that was steered with pedals and every time he tried to pass me that protruding two by four on the back of my car would threaten his car so that he would put on brakes. I was awarded a prize for winning the first heat of the race and when all other

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SOAP BOX DERBY - *continued from previous page*

prizes had been awarded, I was surprised by being awarded a special prize for having the “best greased car”.

Bob Horsley was the big winner of the first Soap Box Derby in West Point. His car was one of the few that had official Soap Box Derby wheels. The car was named Silver Streak and it actually belonged to Bit Williams, but it was so fast that his parents were afraid for him to drive it. (Everyone who worked in the engineering department for West Point Manufacturing Company had a part in designing and building it.) Bob Horsley was Bit’s cousin and he ended up driving the winning car.



I remember that a friend of mine, Bob Smith, had a car that was so small and so slow that someone on the sidelines had to get out in the street and push him over the finish line. Incidentally, in later years Bob Smith earned a master’s degree in Aeronautical Engineering from Auburn and retired from a responsible job in Tullahoma, Tennessee. Julian Beale says my memory is faulty; that it was his car, not Bob Smiths that had to be pushed over the finish line. Nevertheless, I have no regrets whatsoever of not letting him have any of the goose grease.



This was an event in which boys from all up and down the Valley participated and it encouraged ingenuity and good sportsmanship. Every once in a while, I read about someone in the Valley or in West Point and I say to myself, “Hey, I know him. He raced in the first Soap Box Derby race in West Point!”

■

ZACHRY BROTHERS REMEMBERED *by Ron Williams*

“No, I want to speak to the old Mr. Zachary,” my grandmother remembered as she told me this little story. At the time, money was tight, and the family had an account at Zachry Brothers in West Point. She couldn’t pay the bill until the 15th, and she had to make arrangements.

The young Mr. Zachrys, one of which had already been on the phone, would not do. She was talking business and she wanted to talk to the man in charge. It was only after arrangements had been made with the old Mr. Zachry that she learned that he was no longer an owner in the business. He had long since retired.

Many years ago, she told that story again to Mr. George Zachry, who at the time was the last surviving owner of Zachry Brothers, and they got a good laugh out of it.

There had been a Zachry in business in West Point since the days of Alfred Zachry, great grandfather of Mr. George.

“Alfred Zachry was a firm believer in the cause of the Confederacy,” wrote the late Mr. George, “and was successful in raising a company for the confederate army...”

“At the battle of Spotsylvania Courthouse, Virginia, he lost his left arm (May 1864). Being disabled he returned home and resumed his business and civic pursuits. At the time of his death, he was operating a mercantile business in downtown West Point.”

Alfred’s son, James Trammell Zachry, followed in his father’s footsteps. It has been said of him that at one time he was the largest landowner in Chambers County.

James Trammell’s place of business was located where the Hengstler’s Bridal Gift Shop was located. The Opera House was next door.

“My Grandfather,” remembered Zachry, “never actually ‘ran’ his store. He paid someone to manage the business and he used the business as a place to ‘hang out’ when he wanted to spend the day in town.”

Neither of the two previously mentioned businesses evolved into the Zachry Brothers that most remember.

Mr. George’s father and his brother, Griggs, first worked for the Eady Baker Grocery Company in West Point. After a disagreement with one of the owners, the brothers decided to go into business for themselves and Zachry Brothers, a farm supply store, was opened.

“The building that I remember as the location of Zachry Brothers,” wrote Mr. George, “was built in 1907 by Mr. Lafayette Lanier for the Scott Supply Company... My father and his brother, Griggs, bought this building in 1927... the year in which I was born.”

In those days, most of the stores in West Point catered to the people in town, but Zachry brothers did business with the farmers, whose livelihood was determined by the cotton crop.

“There was a cotton gin about a block or so up the street and in the fall of the year farmers would come to town, gin and sell their cotton, and then come to Zachry brothers to settle their accounts, and buy supplies for the next year.”

The stock of Zachry brothers consisted of only staple items and 1/2 of the floor was taken up with stacks of 50-pound sacks of flour, bushel sacks of corn meal, and a bin in which was stored slabs of streak-o-lean and fat back meat.

They also sold cigarettes and tobacco products, khaki work pants and work shirts, and bandanas and socks, which hung from a barrel hoop from the ceiling.

“You could buy a pair of Tom Cat overalls for \$3.25 a pair or a pair of Hawk Brand overalls for \$4.95,” Zachry continued. “Any boy or man that bought a pair of Hawk Brand overalls was ‘stepping out’ in high cotton.”

As a boy, Mr. Zachary could work at the store on weekends and at Christmas, where his job was to bag candy to be sold by the pound. He enjoyed that but

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ZACHRY BROTHERS REMEMBERED - *continued from previous page*

he did try to avoid selling sugar and coffee, which came in big barrels. These items had to be dipped by scoops and left him feeling like he needed to go home and take a bath.

During World War II, Zachry Brothers went out of its way to meet the needs of its customers. In those days, the mills were making tent material and khaki to be used for the military, and a lot of the cloth had imperfections, which were piling up in the warehouse. Since civilians could not get cloth, the Zachry's came up with an idea.

"My father had a truck sent to the dye works warehouse, got a bale of the remnants, and we displayed the remnants on a table in front of the store and priced them at \$0.25 a pound."

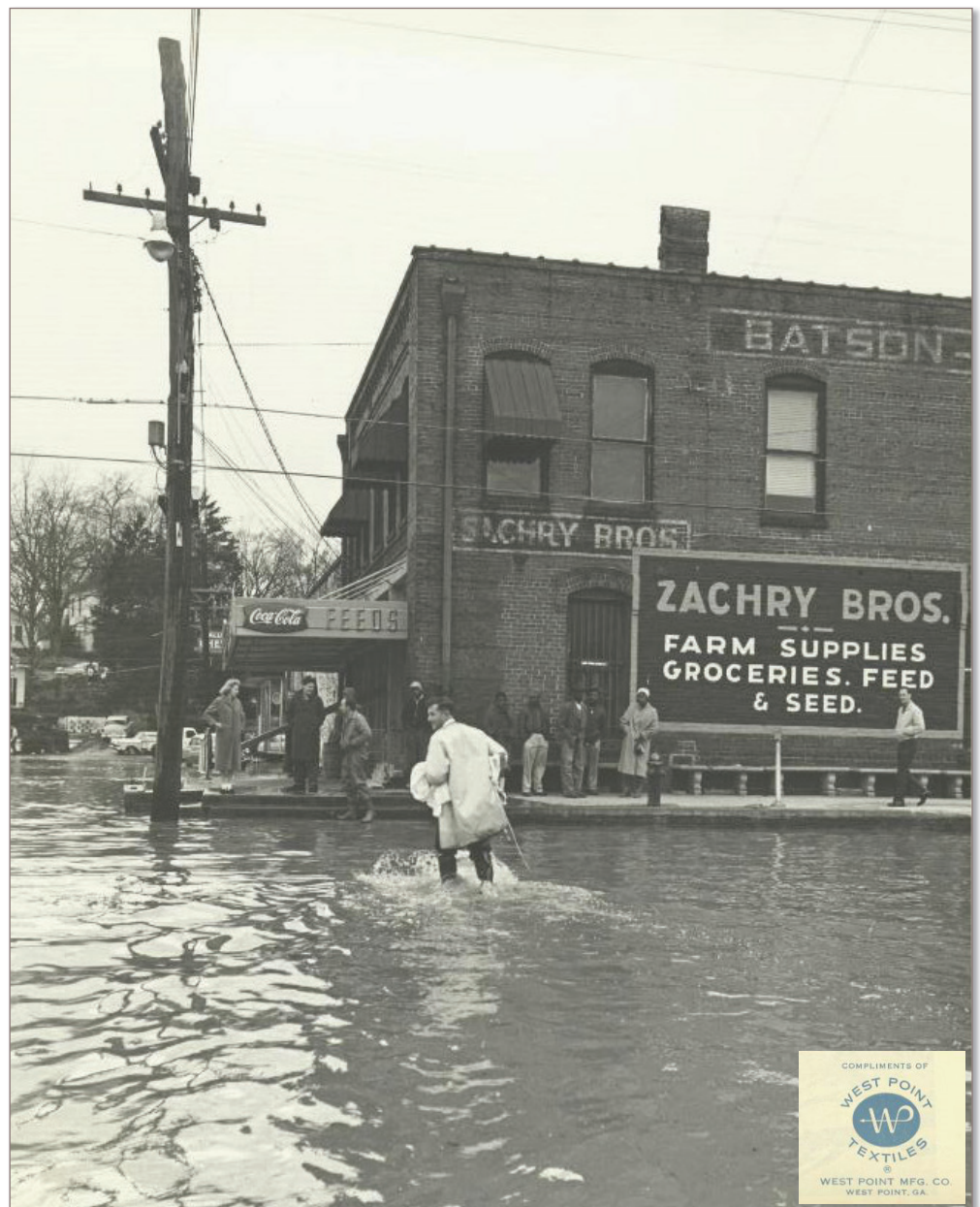
Though they never advertised these, word quickly got around, and the store began to ship the cloth all over the United States and even to Canada. Mr. Zachary remembered that there was a group of Amish people that frequently ordered. They specified dark colors, and if a mistake was made and red was sent, they wouldn't even leave the post office with it.

Over the years the business changed to meet the needs of the customers. A meat market, which is reputed to have been the best around, was added. Some felt that this was a mistake, but a year later they found that the only mistake had been making the market too small.

The days are gone from West Point when shopkeepers hurried to raise the stock levels above the expected floods.

Mule-drawn wagons are no longer commonplace, and Bessie Word no longer drives her tractor to town.

Zachry Brothers closed in 1972. The benches that once sat out in front of the store are no longer there to beckon you to sit and stay awhile, and men don't rest in cane bottom chairs near the boiler, but Mr. George Zachary and many others in the Valley remembered fondly when they did.



Zachry Bros. store during a West Point flood. Courtesy of the Cobb Memorial Archives.



**MEMORIES OF THE
GREAT DEPRESSION**

Chattahoochee Valley Historical Society

\$10 *Memories of the Great Depression*

Memories of the Great Depression. A collection of 65 essays, including “humorous anecdotes and poignant stories mixed with a generous dose of philosophy”. 136 pages. Randall Allen, editor. Copyright 1993. CVHS Publication No. 17.

Personal essays; soft cover

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